

Intercultural Understanding Guide: Zimbabwe Culture

Geographic context:

- Zimbabwe, officially as the Republic of Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in Southern Africa.

Language:

- The official language of Zimbabwe is Shona, which is spoken by 70% of the population.
- Ndebele is spoken by 20% of the population.
- Due to the colonization of the United Kingdom in the past, English is also widespread in Zimbabwe.

Values:

- The majority of Zimbabweans maintain a respect for their heritage and ancestors.
- It is believed that Zimbabwe has a longstanding tradition of storytelling and folklore that provides each generation with a sense of connection to their history and ancestors.

Social norm/structure/hierarchy:

- Zimbabwe society has a collectivistic characteristic.
- It is widely accepted that there is a strong cultural hierarchy of respect based on age.
- Older people are presumed to be superior, wiser and more knowledgeable.
- Physical affections between male and female might embarrass Zimbabweans, especially those from rural areas.

Communication style:

- Zimbabweans tend to use indirect communication styles to avoid any infractions.
- Due to the formal nature of Zimbabwean culture, humour could be misunderstood as lack of respect.

Demographics in Australia:

- According to the 2021 Australian Census, there are 39,741 Zimbabweans currently living in Australia. There are also 22,549 Australians who have Zimbabwean ancestry.



References:

- [Cultural Atlas](#)